

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 2

Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 1-34 (Cancelled)

35. (Currently Amended) A toneable conduit, comprising:
an elongate polymeric tube having a wall with an interior surface and an exterior surface, a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and directly under said channel; and
a continuous wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;
said wire capable of transmitting a toning signal to allow the conduit to be detected by toning equipment.

36. (Previously presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 35, wherein the wire is a high elongation wire.

37. (Previously presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 36, wherein the high elongation wire has an elongation of at least about 1%.

38. (Previously presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 37, wherein the high elongation wire has an elongation of at least about 3%.

39. (Previously presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 37, wherein the high elongation wire is selected from the group consisting of copper-clad steel wire, copper-clad aluminum wire, copper wire, and tin copper wire.

40. (Previously presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 37, wherein the high elongation-wire is copper-clad steel wire.

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 3

41. (Previously presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 37, wherein the high elongation wire has a diameter of from about 0.32 mm to about 2.59 mm.

42. (Previously presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 35, wherein the wire is selected from the group consisting of copper-clad steel wire, copper-clad aluminum wire, copper wire, and tin copper wire.

43. (Previously presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 35, wherein the wire is copper-clad steel wire.

44. (Previously presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 35, wherein the wire has a diameter of from about 0.32 mm to about 2.59 mm.

45. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 35, wherein said wire is coated with a coating composition that prevents the wire from adhering to the polymer melt used to form the polymeric tube.

46. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 45, wherein the coating composition is formed of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of fluoropolymers, polyamides, polyesters, polycarbonates, polypropylene, polyurethanes, polyacetals, polyacrylics, epoxies and silicone polymers.

47. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 46, wherein the coating composition is formed of a polymeric material that has a melting temperature of at least about 500°F.

48. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 47, wherein the coating composition is formed of polytetrafluoroethylene.

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 4

49. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 35, wherein said elongate tube has a predetermined wall thickness.

50. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 49, wherein the exterior surface of the tube is smooth.

51. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 35, wherein said elongate polymeric tube is formed of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene and polyvinyl chloride.

52. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 51, wherein said elongate polymeric tube is formed of high density polyethylene.

53. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 35, further comprising at least one additional rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the elongate polymeric tube to facilitate the installation of cable within the conduit.

54. (Currently Amended) A toneable conduit, comprising:
an elongate polymeric tube formed of high density polyethylene having a wall with an interior surface, an exterior surface, and a predetermined wall thickness; a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and directly under said channel;
and
a continuous, copper-clad steel wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 5

said copper-clad steel wire capable of transmitting a toning signal over long distances to allow the conduit to be detected by toning equipment and capable of being torn out of the polymeric tube to allow the conduit and wire to be coupled.

55. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 54, wherein said wire is coated with a coating composition that prevents the wire from adhering to the polymer melt used to form the polymeric tube.

56. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 35, wherein said wire is capable of being torn out of the polymeric tube to allow the conduit and wire to be coupled.

57. (Currently Amended) A method of coupling a first toneable conduit with a second toneable conduit, comprising the steps of:

providing a first toneable conduit comprising an elongate polymeric tube having a wall with an interior surface and an exterior surface; a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and directly under said channel; and a continuous wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;

providing a second toneable conduit comprising an elongate polymeric tube having a wall with an interior surface and an exterior surface; a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and directly under said channel; and a continuous wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;

tearing the wire of the first toneable conduit through the exterior surface of the first toneable conduit;

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 6

tearing the wire of the second toneable conduit through the exterior surface of the second toneable conduit;

mechanically connecting the first conduit and second conduit; and

electrically connecting the wire from the first toneable conduit and the wire from the second toneable conduit.

58. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 57 [[56]], said providing steps comprising providing a first toneable conduit and a second toneable conduit wherein the wire in the first toneable conduit and in the second toneable conduit is a copper-clad steel wire.

59. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 57 [[56]], said providing steps comprising providing a first toneable conduit and a second toneable conduit wherein the wire in the first toneable conduit and in the second toneable conduit is coated with a coating composition that comprises polytetrafluoroethylene.

60. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 57 [[56]], said providing steps comprising providing a first toneable conduit and a second toneable conduit wherein the elongate polymeric tube of the first toneable conduit and the second toneable conduit is formed of high density polyethylene.

61. (Currently Amended) A toneable conduit, comprising:

an elongate polymeric tube having a wall with an interior surface and an exterior surface, a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and supporting said channel; and

a continuous wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;

said wire capable of transmitting a toning signal to allow the conduit to be detected by toning equipment.

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 7

62. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, wherein the wire is a high elongation wire.

63. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 62, wherein the high elongation wire has an elongation of at least about 1%.

64. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 63, wherein the high elongation wire has an elongation of at least about 3%.

65. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 63, wherein the high elongation-wire is selected from the group consisting of copper-clad steel wire, copper-clad aluminum wire, copper wire, and tin copper wire.

66. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 63, wherein the high elongation wire is copper-clad steel wire.

67. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 63, wherein the high elongation wire has a diameter of from about 0.32 mm to about 2.59 mm.

68. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, wherein the wire is selected from the group consisting of copper-clad steel wire, copper-clad aluminum wire, copper wire, and tin copper wire.

69. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, wherein the wire is copper-clad steel wire.

70. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, wherein the wire has a diameter of from about 0.32 mm to about 2.59 mm.

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 8

71. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, wherein said wire is coated with a coating composition that prevents the wire from adhering to the polymer melt used to form the polymeric tube.

72. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, wherein the coating composition is formed of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of fluoropolymers, polyamides, polyesters, polycarbonates, polypropylene, polyurethanes, polyacetals, polyacrylics, epoxies and silicone polymers.

73. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 72, wherein the coating composition is formed of a polymeric material that has a melting temperature of at least about 500°F.

74. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 73, wherein the coating composition is formed of polytetrafluoroethylene.

75. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, wherein said elongate tube has a predetermined wall thickness.

76. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 75, wherein the exterior surface of the tube is smooth.

77. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, wherein said elongate polymeric tube is formed of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene and polyvinyl chloride.

78. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 77, wherein said elongate polymeric tube is formed of high density polyethylene.

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 9

79. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, further comprising at least one additional rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the elongate polymeric tube to facilitate the installation of cable within the conduit.

80. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 61, wherein said wire is capable of being torn out of the polymeric tube to allow the conduit and wire to be coupled.

81. (Currently Amended) A toneable conduit, comprising:
an elongate polymeric tube formed of high density polyethylene having a wall with an interior surface, an exterior surface, and a predetermined wall thickness; a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and supporting said channel; and
a continuous, copper-clad steel wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;
said copper-clad steel wire capable of transmitting a toning signal over long distances to allow the conduit to be detected by toning equipment and capable of being torn out of the polymeric tube to allow the conduit and wire to be coupled.

82. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 81, wherein said wire is coated with a coating composition that prevents the wire from adhering to the polymer melt used to form the polymeric tube.

83. (Currently Amended) A method of coupling a first toneable conduit with a second toneable conduit, comprising the steps of:
providing a first toneable conduit comprising an elongate polymeric tube having a wall with an interior surface and an exterior surface; a channel extending longitudinally within the

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 10

wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and supporting said channel; and a continuous wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;

providing a second toneable conduit comprising an elongate polymeric tube having a wall with an interior surface and an exterior surface; a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and supporting said channel; and a continuous wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;

tearing the wire of the first toneable conduit through the exterior surface of the first toneable conduit;

tearing the wire of the second toneable conduit through the exterior surface of the second toneable conduit;

mechanically connecting the first conduit and second conduit; and

electrically connecting the wire from the first toneable conduit and the wire from the second toneable conduit.

84. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 83, said providing steps comprising providing a first toneable conduit and a second toneable conduit wherein the wire in the first toneable conduit and in the second toneable conduit is a copper-clad steel wire.

85. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 83, said providing steps comprising providing a first toneable conduit and a second toneable conduit wherein the wire in the first toneable conduit and in the second toneable conduit is coated with a coating composition that comprises polytetrafluoroethylene.

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 11

86. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 83, said providing steps comprising providing a first toneable conduit and a second toneable conduit wherein the elongate polymeric tube of the first toneable conduit and the second toneable conduit is formed of high density polyethylene.

87. (Currently Amended) A toneable conduit, comprising:
an elongate polymeric tube having a wall with an interior surface and an exterior surface, a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and on the same radius as said channel; and
a continuous wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;
said wire capable of transmitting a toning signal to allow the conduit to be detected by toning equipment.

88. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, wherein the wire is a high elongation wire.

89. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 88, wherein the high elongation wire has an elongation of at least about 1%.

90. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 89, wherein the high elongation wire has an elongation of at least about 3%.

91. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 89, wherein the high elongation-wire is selected from the group consisting of copper-clad steel wire, copper-clad aluminum wire, copper wire, and tin copper wire.

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 12

92. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 89, wherein the high elongation-wire is copper-clad steel wire.

93. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 89, wherein the high elongation wire has a diameter of from about 0.32 mm to about 2.59 mm.

94. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, wherein the wire is selected from the group consisting of copper-clad steel wire, copper-clad aluminum wire, copper wire, and tin copper wire.

95. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, wherein the wire is copper-clad steel wire.

96. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, wherein the wire has a diameter of from about 0.32 mm to about 2.59 mm.

97. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, wherein said wire is coated with a coating composition that prevents the wire from adhering to the polymer melt used to form the polymeric tube.

98. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, wherein the coating composition is formed of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of fluoropolymers, polyamides, polyesters, polycarbonates, polypropylene, polyurethanes, polyacetals, polyacrylics, epoxies and silicone polymers.

99. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 98, wherein the coating composition is formed of a polymeric material that has a melting temperature of at least about 500°F.

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 13

100. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 99, wherein the coating composition is formed of polytetrafluoroethylene.

101. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, wherein said elongate tube has a predetermined wall thickness.

102. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 101, wherein the exterior surface of the tube is smooth.

103. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, wherein said elongate polymeric tube is formed of a polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene and polyvinyl chloride.

104. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 103, wherein said elongate polymeric tube is formed of high density polyethylene.

105. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, further comprising at least one additional rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the elongate polymeric tube to facilitate the installation of cable within the conduit.

106. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 87, wherein said wire is capable of being torn out of the polymeric tube to allow the conduit and wire to be coupled.

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 14

107. (Currently Amended) A toneable conduit, comprising:

an elongate polymeric tube formed of high density polyethylene having a wall with an interior surface, an exterior surface, and a predetermined wall thickness; a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and on the same radius as said channel; and

a continuous, copper-clad steel wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;

said copper-clad steel wire capable of transmitting a toning signal over long distances to allow the conduit to be detected by toning equipment and capable of being torn out of the polymeric tube to allow the conduit and wire to be coupled.

108. (Previously Presented) The toneable conduit according to Claim 107, wherein said wire is coated with a coating composition that prevents the wire from adhering to the polymer melt used to form the polymeric tube.

109. (Currently Amended) A method of coupling a first toneable conduit with a second toneable conduit, comprising the steps of:

providing a first toneable conduit comprising an elongate polymeric tube having a wall with an interior surface and an exterior surface; a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric tube, and located radially inward from and on the same radius as said channel; and a continuous wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;

providing a second toneable conduit comprising an elongate polymeric tube having a wall with an interior surface and an exterior surface; a channel extending longitudinally within the wall of the elongate polymeric tube; and a stabilizing rib extending longitudinally along the interior surface of the wall of the elongate polymeric tube, integral with the elongate polymeric

Appl. No.: 09/989,289
Filed: November 20, 2001
Page 15

tube, and located radially inward from and on the same radius as said channel; and a continuous wire coincident with the channel in the elongate polymeric tube;

tearing the wire of the first toneable conduit through the exterior surface of the first toneable conduit;

tearing the wire of the second toneable conduit through the exterior surface of the second toneable conduit;

mechanically connecting the first conduit and second conduit; and

electrically connecting the wire from the first toneable conduit and the wire from the second toneable conduit.

110. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 109, said providing steps comprising providing a first toneable conduit and a second toneable conduit wherein the wire in the first toneable conduit and in the second toneable conduit is a copper-clad steel wire.

111. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 109, said providing steps comprising providing a first toneable conduit and a second toneable conduit wherein the wire in the first toneable conduit and in the second toneable conduit is coated with a coating composition that comprises polytetrafluoroethylene.

112. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 109, said providing steps comprising providing a first toneable conduit and a second toneable conduit wherein the elongate polymeric tube of the first toneable conduit and the second toneable conduit is formed of high density polyethylene.